

Validation of municipal annexations  
(HB 273 by Watson)

DIGEST: The bill would have validated annexations or attempted annexations of territory prior to Aug. 24, 1981 by any incorporated city or town with a population of 200 or more. The validation did not apply to annexations within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of another municipality without the municipality's consent, nor to any action held invalid by a final court judgment.

GOVERNOR'S  
REASONS

FOR VETO: This bill might interfere with the settlement of the question of gulfward annexation by cities on the Gulf of Mexico. HB 411 (signed) places a two-year moratorium on gulfward annexation until the Legislature can come to a final decision on this problem. Signing this bill might also cut off a potential court test of this matter by the Attorney General.

SPONSOR'S  
REACTION:

Rep. Watson said the only intention of the bill was to solve a problem for the City of La Porte, at the city's request. La Porte was not able to hold an annexation election on the date it intended to because of a hurricane. The election was held on an alternate date not authorized by state law. Assuming the Governor's statement is correct, the sponsor does not object to the veto. The La Porte problem can be taken care of in the next session.

NOTES: Under HB 411 (Hanna, et al.), a home-rule city may not annex state-owned submerged lands before Oct. 1, 1983. The bill does not affect annexations completed or contracts in effect at the time of its passage. Currently, a home-rule city's boundary may extend to the state line, about 10 miles out from the coast.

Nutria  
(HB 675 by Watson)

DIGEST: The bill restricts the open season and methods for the taking of nutria pelts, and specifies nesting-place and breeding-place protection, all to correspond to the statutory provisions regarding muskrat under Section 72 of the Parks and Wildlife Code.

GOVERNOR'S  
REASONS

FOR VETO: HB 1831, already signed, is a comprehensive revision of the fur-bearing animal statutes. HB 1831 repeals Section 72 of the Parks and Wildlife Code, making this bill redundant.

SPONSOR'S  
VIEW:

Rep. Watson said he had not had a chance to study HB 1831, but understood that, under the bill, the Parks and Wildlife Commission will regulate the hunting of fur-bearing animals by proclamation. The sponsor disagrees with this policy. He believes the Legislature should regulate hunting by statute, in accord with the desires of the counties. Chambers County, which he represents, should be allowed to decide on its own hunting seasons.

NOTES:

HB 1831 applies to fur-bearing animals except those populations on the state's endangered list.

Catfish  
(HB 692 by Browder)

DIGEST:

The bill would have revised the limits on the size and number of catfish that holders of commercial and sport fishing licenses may catch or possess. It specified that proclamations by the Parks and Wildlife Commission regulating the catching and possession of catfish must conform with the limits specified in the bill. The commission could set temporary limits for a particular lake or river if it found there was a danger of depletion or waste.

GOVERNOR'S  
REASONS  
FOR VETO:

The bill hinders the Parks and Wildlife Commission's ability to manage catfish by reducing its flexibility in setting daily catch, retention, and size limits. Under the bill, a person could purchase a commercial fishing license for \$10 and be exempt from the sport catch and possession limits. HB 692 seriously conflicts with the purposes of the Uniform Wildlife Regulatory Act.

SPONSOR'S  
VIEW:

Rep. Browder said the bill was carefully worked out among the sponsor, the Parks and Wildlife Department, and commercial and sport fishing people. It does not hinder the authority of Parks and Wildlife. The agency has full power to change the limits specified in the bill in any lake or river where there is a danger of depletion or waste of catfish. The bill passed with virtually no opposition.

The sponsor said the chairman of the Parks and Wildlife Commission got the bill vetoed. The sponsor is in a "running gun battle" with Parks and Wildlife because they don't listen to people in the counties, Browder said. That's why so many counties are trying to go back to general law in place of Parks and Wildlife regulations.